Claims 67 and 68 have been amended to correct readily apparent typographical errors. Claim 66 has been amended to point out more particularly that the antibody used in the claimed method is one that binds to a particular human MIF polypeptide, namely, the 12.5 kDa human MIF having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 5. Support for this amendment is provided, for instance, at page 10, line 3, as amended in the preliminary amendment file with the instant application on April 25, 2000, indicating that the amino acid sequence of human T cell MIF of the invention is listed in the Sequence Listing at SEQ ID NO: 5. No new matter is introduced by the present amendment and therefore entry and consideration thereof are respectfully requested.

Claims 66-68 are rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,350,687. The '687 patent is considered to disclose a diagnostic method for determining the amount of MIF in plasma (i.e., serum), by ELISA, using a monoclonal antibody to a 14kDa human MIF (see column 37-38, 42, 45, 46 and 81 in particular). The Examiner interprets the term "approximately 12.5 kDa" in the present claims to mean a range of proteins which have a molecular weight of approximately 12.5 kDa, including the prior art teachings of a 14 kDa human MIF. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 66 as presently amended specifies an antibody that anti-MIF antibody binds to the 12.5 kDa human MIF having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 5. Comparison of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 5 with that of the so-called "MIF-related polypeptide (MRP-14)", which the Examiner calls the "14 kDa human MIF", recited, for instance in Claim 1 of the cited '687 patent, shows that these to sequences have no significant homology. Applicants therefore believe that an antibody now specified in the instant claims, that binds to a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5, would not be expected to bind to the amino acid sequence of the cited MRP-14 polypeptide.

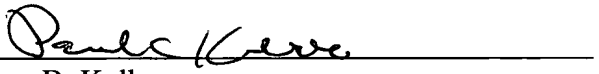
Accordingly, Applicants believe that the present amendment overcomes the rejection of Claims 66-68 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,350,687 and therefore this rejection may properly be withdrawn.

All objections and rejections having been fully addressed, Applicants believe that the instant claims as presently amended are free of the cited art and otherwise in condition for allowance, and early notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

If any issues remain to be addressed in this matter, which might be resolved by discussion, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicants' undersigned counsel at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

PIPER MARBURY RUDNICK & WOLFE LLP



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MARKED-UP COPY OF AMENDED CLAIMS

66. (Amended) A diagnostic method for determining the amount of MIF protein in a patient, comprising:

(a) obtaining a bodily fluid sample from the patient; and

(b) determining the amount of MIF in the sample using an immunoassay with an anti-MIF antibody, wherein the immunoassay is selected from the group consisting of ELISA, immunoprecipitation, immunohistocytochemistry, and Western analysis, and wherein MIF is a human MIF polypeptide having a molecular weight approximately 12.5 kDa, and wherein the anti-MIF antibody binds to the 12.5 kDa human MIF having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 5.

67. (Amended) The diagnostic method [claim] of Claim 66, wherein the bodily fluid sample is selected from the group consisting of blood, serum, urine, lymph, saliva, tumor tissue, placental tissue, umbilical cord tissue, amniotic fluid, chorionic villi tissue and combinations thereof.

68. (Amended) The diagnostic method of [claim] Claim 66, wherein the anti-MIF antibody is a monoclonal antibody or antigen-binding fragment or fusion protein thereof.